

French language

French (*français* [fʁãsɛ] or *langue française* [lãg fʁãsɛ:z]) is a Romance language of the Indo-European family. It descended from the Vulgar Latin of the Roman Empire, as did all Romance languages. French evolved from Gallo-Romance, the Latin spoken in Gaul, and more specifically in Northern Gaul. Its closest relatives are the other langues d'oïl—languages historically spoken in northern France and in southern Belgium, which French (Francien) largely supplanted. French was also influenced by native Celtic languages of Northern Roman Gaul like Gallia Belgica and by the (Germanic) Frankish language of the post-Roman Frankish invaders. Today, owing to France's past overseas expansion, there are numerous French-based creole languages, most notably Haitian Creole. A French-speaking person or nation may be referred to as **Francophone** in both English and French.

French is an official language in 29 countries across multiple continents,^[5] most of which are members of the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF), the community of 84 countries which share the official use or teaching of French. French is also one of six official languages used in the United Nations.^[6] It is spoken as a first language (in descending order of the number of speakers) in France, the Canadian provinces of Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick as well as other Francophone regions, Belgium (Wallonia and the Brussels-Capital Region), western Switzerland (cantons of Bern, Fribourg, Geneva, Jura, Neuchâtel, Vaud, Valais), Monaco, partly in Luxembourg, the states of Louisiana, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont in the United States, and in northwestern Italy (region of Aosta Valley), and by various communities elsewhere.^[7]

In 2015, approximately 40% of the francophone population (including L2 and partial speakers) lived in Europe, 35% in sub-Saharan Africa, 15% in North Africa and the Middle East, 8% in the Americas, and 1% in Asia and Oceania.^[8] French is the fourth most widely spoken mother tongue in the European Union.^[9] Of Europeans who speak other languages natively, approximately one-fifth are able to speak French as a second language.^[10] French is the second most taught foreign language in the EU.^[11] French is also the 18th most natively spoken language in the world, 6th most spoken language by total number of speakers and the second or third most studied language worldwide (with about 120 million current learners).^[12] As a result of French and Belgian colonialism from the 16th century onward, French was introduced to new territories in the Americas, Africa and Asia. Most second-

French	
<i>français</i>	
Pronunciation	[fʁãsɛ]
Region	distribution maps below
Native speakers	76.8 million worldwide An estimated 274 million French speakers (L1 plus L2; 2014) ^{[1][2]}
Language family	Indo-European <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Italic ▪ Romance ▪ Western Romance ▪ Gallo-Romance ▪ Oïl ▪ French
Early forms	Old Latin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classical Latin ▪ Vulgar Latin ▪ Old French ▪ Middle French
Writing system	Latin (French alphabet) French Braille
Signed forms	Signed French (<i>français signé</i>)
Official status	
Official language in	29 countries <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Belgium  Benin

language speakers reside in Francophone Africa, in particular Gabon, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritius, Senegal and Ivory Coast.^[13]

French is estimated to have about 76 million native speakers and about 235 million daily, fluent speakers^{[14][1][15]} and another 77 to 110 million secondary speakers who speak it as a second language to varying degrees of proficiency, mainly in Africa.^[16] According to the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), approximately 300 million people worldwide are "able to speak the language",^[17] without specifying the criteria for this estimation or whom it encompasses.^[2] According to a demographic projection led by the Université Laval and the Réseau Démographie de l'Agence universitaire de la francophonie, the total number of French speakers will reach approximately 500 million in 2025 and 650 million by 2050.^[18] OIF estimates 700 million by 2050, 80% of whom will be in Africa.^[8]

French has a long history as an international language of literature and scientific standards and is a primary or second language of many international organisations including the United Nations, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the World Trade Organization, the International Olympic Committee, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. In 2011, Bloomberg Businessweek ranked French the third most useful language for business, after English and Standard Mandarin Chinese.^[19]

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	Burkina Faso
	Burundi
	Cameroon
	Canada
	Central African Republic
	Chad
	Comoros
	Congo
	DR Congo
	Djibouti
	Equatorial Guinea
	France
	Gabon
	Guinea
	Haiti
	Ivory Coast
	Luxembourg
	Madagascar
	Mali
	Monaco
	Niger
	Rwanda
	Senegal
	Seychelles
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	11 dependent entities
	Aosta Valley (Italy)
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	New Brunswick (Canada)

Orthography

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History

French is a Romance language (meaning that it is descended primarily from Vulgar Latin) that evolved out of the Gallo-Romance dialects spoken in northern France. The language's early forms include Old French and Middle French.

Vulgar Latin in Gallia

Due to Roman rule, Latin was gradually adopted by the inhabitants of Gaul, and as the language was learned by the common people it developed a distinct local character, with grammatical differences from Latin as spoken elsewhere, some of which being attested on graffiti.^[20] This local variety evolved into the Gallo-Romance tongues, which include French and its closest relatives, such as Arpitan.

The evolution of Latin in Gaul was shaped by its coexistence for over half a millennium beside the native Celtic Gaulish language, which did not go extinct until the late 6th century, long after the Fall of the Western Roman Empire.^[21] The population remained 90% indigenous in origin,^{[22][23]} and instead of Roman settlers, the Romanizing class was the local native elite, whose children learned Latin in Roman schools; at the time of the collapse of the Empire, this local elite had been slowly abandoning Gaulish entirely, but the rural and lower class populations remained Gaulish speakers who could sometimes also speak Latin or Greek.^[24] The final language shift from Gaulish to Vulgar Latin among rural and lower class populations occurred later, when both they and the incoming Frankish ruler/military class adopted the

 New Caledonia

 Puducherry
(India)^[3]

 Quebec
(Canada)

 Saint Barthélemy

 Saint Martin

 Saint Pierre and Miquelon

 Wallis and Futuna

Regulated by

Académie française
(French Academy)
(France)

Office québécois de la langue française
(Quebec Board of the French Language)
(Quebec)

Language codes

ISO 639-1

fr (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?iso_639_1=fr)

ISO 639-2

fre (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=145) (B)
fra (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=145) (T)

ISO 639-3

fra

Gallo-Roman Vulgar Latin speech of the urban intellectual elite.^[24]

The Gaulish language likely survived into the 6th century in France, despite considerable Romanization.^[21] Coexisting with Latin, Gaulish helped shape the Vulgar Latin dialects that developed into French,^{[24][21]} with effects including loanwords and calques (including *oui*,^[25] the word for "yes"),^{[26][25]} sound changes shaped by Gaulish influence,^{[27][28]} and influences in conjugation and word order.^{[26][25][20]} Recent computational studies suggest that early gender shifts may have been motivated by the gender of the corresponding word in Gaulish.^[29]

Old French

The beginning of French in Gaul was greatly influenced by Germanic invasions into the country. These invasions had the greatest impact on the northern part of the country and on the language there.^[30] A language divide began to grow across the country. The population in the north spoke langue d'oïl while the population in the south spoke langue d'oc.^[30] Langue d'oïl grew into what is known as Old French. The period of Old French spanned between the 8th and 14th centuries. Old French shared many characteristics with Latin. For example, Old French made use of different possible word orders just as Latin did because it had a case system that retained the difference between nominative subjects and oblique non-subjects.^[31] The period is marked by a heavy superstrate influence from the Germanic Frankish language, which non-exhaustively included the use in upper-class speech and higher registers of V2 word order,^[32] a large percentage of the vocabulary (now at around 15% of modern French vocabulary^[33]) including the impersonal singular pronoun *on* (a calque of Germanic *man*), and the name of the language itself.

Middle French

Within Old French many dialects emerged but the Francien dialect is one that not only continued but also thrived during the Middle French period (14th century–17th century).^[30] Modern French grew out of this Francien dialect.^[30] Grammatically, during the period of Middle French, noun declensions were lost and there began to be standardized rules. Robert Estienne published the first Latin-French dictionary, which included information about phonetics, etymology, and grammar.^[34] Politically, the Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts (1539) named French the language of law.

Modern French

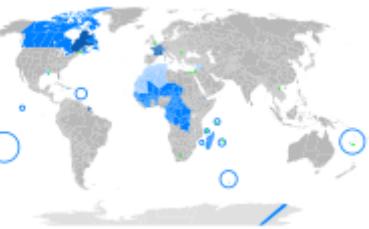
During the 17th century, French replaced Latin as the most important language of diplomacy and international relations (lingua franca). It retained this role until approximately the middle of the 20th century, when it was replaced by English as the United States became the dominant global power following the Second World War.^{[35][36]} Stanley Meisler of the Los Angeles Times said that the fact that the Treaty of Versailles was written in English as well as French was the "first diplomatic blow" against the language.^[37]

Glottolog

stan1290 (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/stan1290>)^[4]

Linguasphere

51-AAA-i



- Regions where French is the main language
- Regions where it is an official language but not a majority native language
- Regions where it is a second language
- Regions where it is a minority language

During the Grand Siècle (17th century), France, under the rule of powerful leaders such as Cardinal Richelieu and Louis XIV, enjoyed a period of prosperity and prominence among European nations. Richelieu established the Académie française to protect the French language. By the early 1800s, Parisian French had become the primary language of the aristocracy in France.

Near the beginning of the 19th century, the French government began to pursue policies with the end goal of eradicating the many minorities and regional languages (patois) spoken in France. This began in 1794 with Henri Grégoire's "Report on the necessity and means to annihilate the patois and to universalize the use of the French language". When public education was made compulsory, only French was taught and the use of any other (patois) language was punished. The goals of the Public School System were made especially clear to the French-speaking teachers sent to teach students in regions such as Occitania and Brittany: "And remember, Gents: you were given your position in order to kill the Breton language" were instructions given from a French official to teachers in the French department of Finistère (western Brittany).^[38] The prefect of Basses-Pyrénées in the French Basque Country wrote in 1846: "Our schools in the Basque Country are particularly meant to replace the Basque language with French...".^[38] Students were taught that their ancestral languages were inferior and they should be ashamed of them; this process was known in the Occitan-speaking region as Vergonha.

Among the historic reformers of French orthography, such as Louis Maigret, Marle M., Marcellin Berthelot, Philibert Monet, Jacques Peletier du Mans, and Somaize, nowadays the most striking reform is proposed by Mickael Korvin, a Franco-American linguist of Hungarian origin who wants to eliminate accents, silent letters, double letters and more.^[39]

Geographic distribution

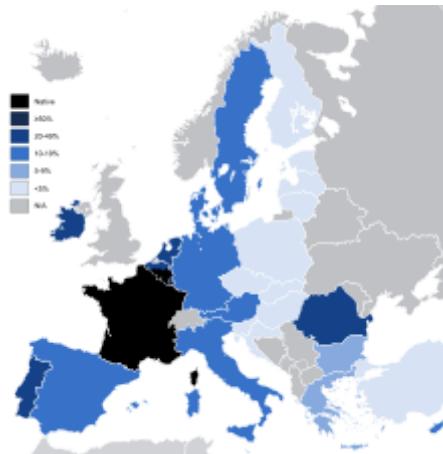
Europe

Spoken by 19.71% of the European Union's population, French is the third most widely spoken language in the EU, after English and German.^{[9][41]}

Under the Constitution of France, French has been the official language of the Republic since 1992,^[42] although the ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts made it mandatory for legal documents in 1539. France mandates the use of French in official government publications, public education except in specific cases, and legal contracts; advertisements must bear a translation of foreign words.

In Belgium, French is the official language of Wallonia (excluding a part of the East Cantons, which are German-speaking) and one of the two official languages—along with Dutch—of the Brussels-Capital Region, where it is spoken by the majority of the population often as their primary language.^[43]

French is one of the four official languages of Switzerland, along with German, Italian, and Romansh, and is spoken in the western part of Switzerland, called Romandy, of which Geneva is the largest city. The language divisions in Switzerland do not coincide with political subdivisions, and some cantons have bilingual status: for example, cities such as Biel/Bienne and cantons such as Valais, Fribourg and Berne. French is the native language of about 23% of the Swiss population, and is spoken by 50%^[44] of the population.



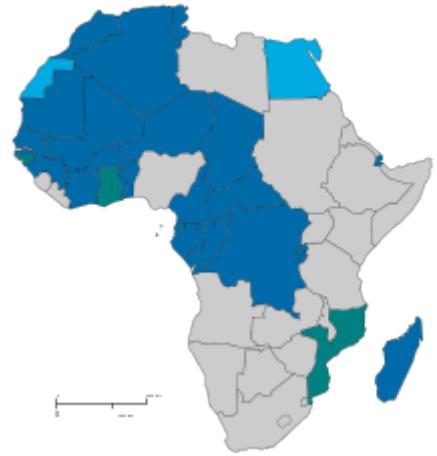
Knowledge of French in the European Union and candidate countries^[40]

French is also an official language of Monaco and Luxembourg, as well as in the Aosta Valley region of Italy, while French dialects remain spoken by minorities on the Channel Islands. It is also spoken in Andorra and is the main language after Catalan in El Pas de la Casa. The language is taught as the primary second language in the German *land* of Saarland, with French being taught from pre-school and over 43% of citizens being able to speak French.^{[45][46]}

Africa

The majority of the world's French-speaking population lives in Africa. According to the 2007 report by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, an estimated 115 million African people spread across 31 Francophone countries can speak French as either a first or a second language.^[13] This number does not include the people living in non-Francophone African countries who have learned French as a foreign language.^[13] Due to the rise of French in Africa, the total French-speaking population worldwide is expected to reach 700 million people in 2050.^[49] French is the fastest growing language on the continent (in terms of either official or foreign languages).^{[50][51]} French is mostly a second language in Africa, but it has become a first language in some urban areas, such as the region of Abidjan, Ivory Coast^[52] and in Libreville, Gabon.^[53] There is not a single African French, but multiple forms that diverged through contact with various indigenous African languages.^[54]

Sub-Saharan Africa is the region where the French language is most likely to expand, because of the expansion of education and rapid population growth.^[55] It is also where the language has evolved the most in recent years.^{[56][57]} Some vernacular forms of French in Africa can be difficult to understand for French speakers from other countries,^[58] but written forms of the language are very closely related to those of the rest of the French-speaking world.



- Countries usually considered part of Francophone Africa.
Their population was 430.5 million in 2019,^[47] and it is forecast to reach between 845 million^[48] and 866 million^[47] in 2050.
- Countries sometimes considered as Francophone Africa
- Countries that are not Francophone but are Members or Observers of the OIF

Americas

French is the second most common language in Canada, after English, and both are official languages at the federal level. It is the first language of 9.5 million people or 29% and the second language for 2.07 million or 6% of the entire population of Canada.^[15] French is the sole official language in the province of Quebec, being the mother tongue for some 7 million people, or almost 80% (2006 Census) of the province. About 95% of the people of Quebec speak French as either their first or second language, and for some as their third language. Quebec is also home to the city of Montreal, which is the world's 4th-largest French-speaking city, by number of first language speakers.^[59] New Brunswick and Manitoba are the only officially bilingual provinces, though full bilingualism is enacted only in New Brunswick, where about one third of the population is Francophone. French is also an official language of all of the territories (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon). Out of the three, Yukon has the most French speakers, comprising just under 4% of the population.^[60] Furthermore, while French is not an official language in Ontario, the French Language Services Act ensures that provincial services are to be available in the language. The Act applies to areas of the province where there are significant Francophone communities, namely Eastern Ontario and Northern Ontario. Elsewhere, sizable French-speaking minorities are found in southern Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and the Port au Port Peninsula in Newfoundland and Labrador, where the

unique Newfoundland French dialect was historically spoken. Smaller pockets of French speakers exist in all other provinces. The Ontarian city of Ottawa, the Canadian capital, is also effectively bilingual, as it has a large population of federal government workers, who are required to offer services in both French and English, and is across a river from Quebec, opposite the major city of Gatineau with which it forms a single metropolitan area.

According to the United States Census Bureau (2011), French is the fourth^[61] most-spoken language in the United States after English, Spanish, and Chinese, when all forms of French are considered together and all dialects of Chinese are similarly combined. French remains the second most-spoken language in the states of Louisiana, Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire. Louisiana is home to many distinct dialects, collectively known as Louisiana French. According to the 2000 United States Census, there are over 194,000 people in Louisiana who speak French at home, the most of any state if Creole French is excluded.^[62] New England French, essentially a variant of Canadian French, is spoken in parts of New England. Missouri French was historically spoken in Missouri and Illinois (formerly known as Upper Louisiana), but is nearly extinct today.^[63] French also survived in isolated pockets along the Gulf Coast of what was previously French Lower Louisiana, such as Mon Louis Island, Alabama and DeLisle, Mississippi (the latter only being discovered by linguists in the 1990s) but these varieties are severely endangered or presumed extinct.

French is one of Haiti's two official languages. It is the principal language of writing, school instruction, and administrative use. It is spoken by all educated Haitians and is used in the business sector. It is also used for ceremonial events such as weddings, graduations and church masses. About 70–80% of the country's population have Haitian Creole as their first language; the rest speak French as a first language. The second official language is the recently standardized Haitian Creole, which virtually the entire population of Haiti speaks. Haitian Creole is one of the French-based creole languages, drawing the large majority of its vocabulary from French, with influences from West African languages, as well as several European languages. Haitian Creole is closely related to Louisiana Creole and the creole from the Lesser Antilles.^[64]

French is the official language of both French Guiana on the South American continent,^[65] and of Saint Pierre and Miquelon,^[66] an archipelago off the coast of Newfoundland in North America.

Asia

South Asia

French was spoken in French India and is still one of the official languages of Puducherry.^[67]

Southeast Asia



French language distribution in Canada

- Regions where French is the main language
- Regions where French is an official language but not a majority native language



The "arrêt" signs (French for "stop") are used in Canada while the English *stop*, which is also a valid French word, is used in France and other French-speaking countries and regions.

French was the official language of the colony of French Indochina, comprising modern-day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. It continues to be an administrative language in Laos and Cambodia, although its influence has waned in recent years.^[68] In colonial Vietnam, the elites primarily spoke French, while many servants who worked in French households spoke a French pidgin known as "Tây Bồi" (now extinct). After French rule ended, South Vietnam continued to use French in administration, education, and trade.^[69] Since the Fall of Saigon and the opening of a unified Vietnam's economy, French has gradually been effectively displaced as the main foreign language of choice by English. French nevertheless maintains its colonial legacy by being spoken as a second language by the elderly and elite populations and is presently being revived in higher education and continues to be a diplomatic language in Vietnam. All three countries are official members of the OIF.^[70]

Western Asia

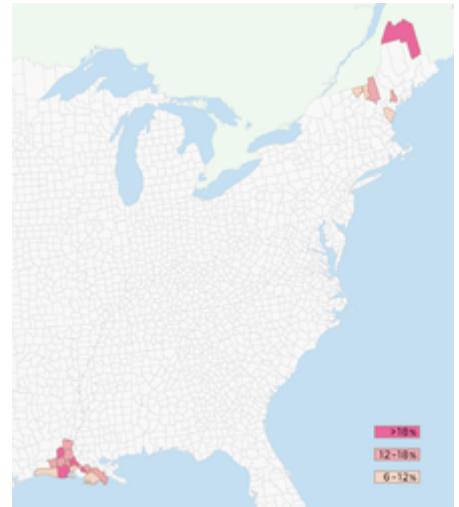
Lebanon

A former French mandate, Lebanon designates Arabic as the sole official language, while a special law regulates cases when French can be publicly used. Article 11 of Lebanon's Constitution states that "Arabic is the official national language. A law determines the cases in which the French language is to be used".^[71] The French language in Lebanon is a widespread second language among the Lebanese people, and is taught in many schools along with Arabic and English. French is used on Lebanese pound banknotes, on road signs, on Lebanese license plates, and on official buildings (alongside Arabic).

Today, French and English are secondary languages of Lebanon, with about 40% of the population being Francophone and 40% Anglophone.^[72] The use of English is growing in the business and media environment. Out of about 900,000 students, about 500,000 are enrolled in Francophone schools, public or private, in which the teaching of mathematics and scientific subjects is provided in French.^[73] Actual usage of French varies depending on the region and social status. One-third of high school students educated in French go on to pursue higher education in English-speaking institutions. English is the language of business and communication, with French being an element of social distinction, chosen for its emotional value.^[74]

Israel

A significant French-speaking community is also present in Israel, primarily among the communities of French Jews in Israel, Moroccan Jews in Israel and Lebanese Jews. Many secondary schools offer French as a foreign language.



French language spread in the United States. Counties marked in lighter pink are those where 6–12% of the population speaks French at home; medium pink, 12–18%; darker pink, over 18%. French-based creole languages are not included.



Areas of French Colonization



Town sign in Standard Arabic and French at the entrance of Rechmaya in Lebanon.

United Arab Emirates and Qatar

The UAE has the status in the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie as an observer state, and Qatar has the status in the organization as an associate state. However, in both countries, French is not spoken by almost any of the general population or migrant workers, but spoken by a small minority of those who invest in Francophone countries or have other financial or family ties. Their entrance as observer and associate states respectively into the organization was aided a good deal by their investments into the Organisation and France itself.^[75] A country's status as an observer state in the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie gives the country the right to send representatives to organization meetings and make formal requests to the organization but they do not have voting rights within the OIF.^[76] A country's status as an associate state also does not give a country voting abilities but associate states can discuss and review organization matters.^[77]

Oceania and Australasia

French is an official language of the Pacific Island nation of Vanuatu, where 45% of the population can speak it.^[78] In the French special collectivity of New Caledonia, 97% of the population can speak, read and write French^[79] while in French Polynesia this figure is 95%,^[80] and in the French collectivity of Wallis and Futuna, it is 84%.^[81]

In French Polynesia and to a lesser extent Wallis and Futuna, where oral and written knowledge of the French language has become almost nearly universal (95% and 84% respectively), French increasingly tends to displace the native Polynesian languages as the language most spoken at home. In French Polynesia, the percentage of the population who reported that French was the language they use the most at home rose from 67% at the 2007 census to 74% at the 2017 census.^{[82][80]} In Wallis and Futuna, the percentage of the population who reported that French was the language they use the most at home rose from 10% at the 2008 census to 13% at the 2018 census.^{[81][83]}



A 500-CFP franc (€4.20; US\$4.70) banknote, used in French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna.

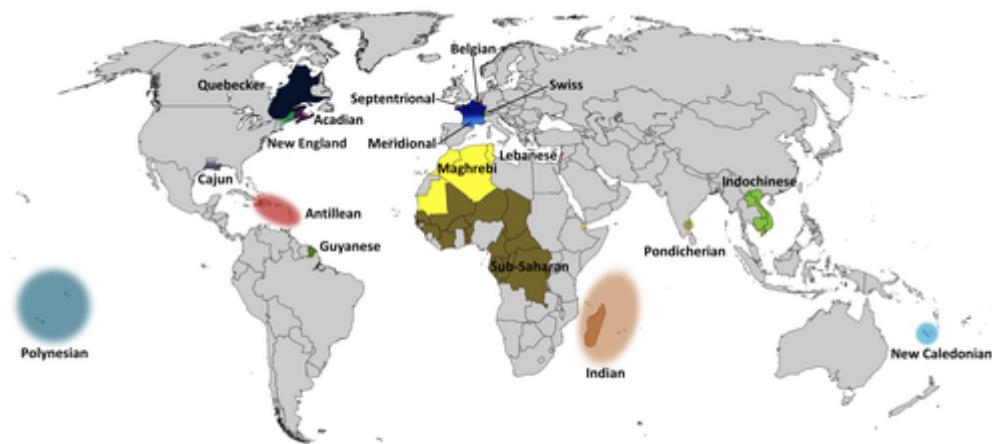
Future

The future of the French language is often discussed in the news. For example, in 2014, The New York Times documented an increase in the teaching of French in New York, especially in K-12 dual-language programs where Spanish and Mandarin are the only second-language options more popular than French.^[84] In a study published in March 2014 by Forbes, the investment bank Natixis said that French could become the world's most spoken language by 2050. It noted that French is spreading in areas where the population is rapidly increasing, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.^[85]

Varieties

- African French
 - Maghreb French (North African French)
- Aostan French
- Belgian French
- Cambodian French

- Canadian French
 - Acadian French
 - Newfoundland French
 - New England French
 - Ontario French
 - Quebec French
- French French
 - Guianese French
 - Meridional French
- Haitian French
- Indian French
- Jersey Legal French
- Lao French
- Louisiana French
 - Cajun French
- Missouri French
- South East Asian French
- Swiss French
- Vietnamese French
- West Indian French



Varieties of the French language in the world

Current status and importance

French is taught in universities around the world, and is one of the world's most influential languages because of its wide use in the worlds of journalism, jurisprudence, education, and diplomacy.^[86] In diplomacy, French is one of the six official languages of the United Nations (and one of the UN Secretariat's only two working languages^[87]), one of twenty official and three working languages of the European Union, an official language of NATO, the International Olympic Committee, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Organization of American States (alongside Spanish, Portuguese and English), the Eurovision Song Contest, one of eighteen official languages of the European Space Agency, World Trade Organization and the least used of the three official languages in the North American Free Trade Agreement countries. It is also a working language in nonprofit organisations such as the Red Cross (alongside English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic and Russian), Amnesty International (alongside 32 other languages of which English is the most used, followed by Spanish, Portuguese, German, and Italian), Médecins sans Frontières (used alongside English, Spanish, Portuguese

and Arabic), and Médecins du Monde (used alongside English).^[88] Given the demographic prospects of the French-speaking nations of Africa, researcher Pascal-Emmanuel Gobry wrote in 2014 that French "could be the language of the future".^[89]

Significant as a judicial language, French is one of the official languages of such major international and regional courts, tribunals, and dispute-settlement bodies as the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Caribbean Court of Justice, the Court of Justice for the Economic Community of West African States, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea the International Criminal Court and the World Trade Organization Appellate Body. It is the sole internal working language of the Court of Justice of the European Union, and makes with English the European Court of Human Rights's two working languages.^[90]

In 1997, George Werber published, in *Language Today*, a comprehensive academic study entitled "The World's 10 most influential languages".^[91] In the article, Werber ranked French as, after English, the second most *influential* language of the world, ahead of Spanish.^[91] His criteria were the numbers of native speakers, the number of secondary speakers (especially high for French among fellow world languages), the number of countries using the language and their respective populations, the economic power of the countries using the language, the number of major areas in which the language is used, and the linguistic prestige associated with the mastery of the language (Werber highlighted that French in particular enjoys considerable linguistic prestige).^[91] In a 2008 reassessment of his article, Werber concluded that his findings were still correct since "the situation among the top ten remains unchanged."^[91]

Knowledge of French is often considered to be a useful skill by business owners in the United Kingdom; a 2014 study found that 50% of British managers considered French to be a valuable asset for their business, thus ranking French as the most sought-after foreign language there, ahead of German (49%) and Spanish (44%).^[92] MIT economist Albert Saiz calculated a 2.3% premium for those who have French as a foreign language in the workplace.^[93]

In English-speaking Canada, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland, French is the first foreign language taught and in number of pupils is far ahead of other languages. In the United States, Spanish is the most commonly taught foreign language in schools and universities, though French is next. In some areas of the country nearest to French-speaking Quebec, it is the language more commonly taught.

Phonology

0:00 / 0:00

Spoken French (Africa)

Consonant phonemes in French

		<u>Labial</u>	<u>Dental/ Alveolar</u>	<u>Palatal/ Postalveolar</u>	<u>Velar/ Uvular</u>
Nasal		<u>m</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>ɲ</u>	<u>ŋ</u>
Stop	<u>voiceless</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>t</u>		<u>k</u>
	<u>voiced</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>d</u>		<u>g</u>
Fricative	<u>voiceless</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>ʃ</u>	
	<u>voiced</u>	<u>v</u>	<u>z</u>	<u>ʒ</u>	<u>ʁ</u>
Approximant	<u>plain</u>		<u>l</u>	<u>j</u>	
	<u>labial</u>			<u>w</u>	

Vowel phonemes in French

Oral						Nasal			
	<u>Front</u>		<u>Central</u>	<u>Back</u>	<u>Front</u>		<u>Back</u>		
	<u>unrounded</u>	<u>rounded</u>			<u>unrounded</u>	<u>rounded</u>			
Close	<u>i</u>	<u>y</u>		<u>u</u>					
Close-mid	<u>e</u>	<u>ø</u>		<u>o</u>					
Open-mid	<u>ɛ/(ɛ:)</u>	<u>œ</u>	(ə)	<u>ɔ</u>					
Open	<u>a</u>			<u>ɑ</u>					

Although there are many French regional accents, foreign learners normally use only one variety of the language.

- There are a maximum of 17 vowels in French, not all of which are used in every dialect: /a/, /ɑ/, /ɛ/, /ɛ:/, /ε/, /ε:/, /i/, /i/, /ø/, /ɔ/, /ɔ/, /u/, /u/, /œ/, /ø/, plus the nasalized vowels /ã/, /ɛ/, /ɔ/ and /œ/. In France, the vowels /a/, /ɛ:/ and /œ/ are tending to be replaced by /a/, /ɛ/ and /ɛ/ in many people's speech, but the distinction of /ɛ/ and /œ/ is present in Meridional French. In Quebec and Belgian French, the vowels /a/, /ə/, /ɛ:/ and /œ/ are present.
- Voiced stops (i.e., /b, d, g/) are typically produced fully voiced throughout.
- Voiceless stops (i.e., /p, t, k/) are unaspirated.
- The velar nasal /ŋ/ can occur in final position in borrowed (usually English) words: *parking, camping, swing*. The palatal nasal /ɲ/ can occur in word initial position (e.g., *gnon*), but it is most frequently found in intervocalic, onset position or word-finally (e.g., *montagne*).
- French has three pairs of homorganic fricatives distinguished by voicing, i.e., labiodental /f/~/v/, dental /s/~/z/, and palato-alveolar /ʃ/~/ʒ/. /s/~/z/ are dental, like the plosives /t/~/d/ and the nasal /n/.
- French has one rhotic whose pronunciation varies considerably among speakers and phonetic contexts. In general, it is described as a voiced uvular fricative, as in [ʁu] *roue*, "wheel". Vowels are often lengthened before this segment. It can be reduced to an approximant, particularly in final position (e.g., *fort*), or reduced to zero in some word-final positions. For other speakers, a uvular trill is also common, and an apical trill [r] occurs in some dialects.

- Lateral and central approximants: The lateral approximant /l/ is unvelarised in both onset (*lire*) and coda position (*il*). In the onset, the central approximants [w], [ɥ], and [j] each correspond to a high vowel, /u/, /y/, and /i/ respectively. There are a few minimal pairs where the approximant and corresponding vowel contrast, but there are also many cases where they are in free variation. Contrasts between /j/ and /i/ occur in final position as in /pɛj/ paye, "pay", vs. /pɛi/ pays, "country".

French pronunciation follows strict rules based on spelling, but French spelling is often based more on history than phonology. The rules for pronunciation vary between dialects, but the standard rules are:

- Final single consonants, in particular s, x, z, t, d, n, p and g, are normally silent. (A consonant is considered "final" when no vowel follows it even if one or more consonants follow it.) The final letters f, k, q, and l, however, are normally pronounced. The final c is sometimes pronounced like in **bac**, **sac**, **roc** but can also be silent like in **blanc** or **estomac**. The final r is usually silent when it follows an e in a word of two or more syllables, but it is pronounced in some words (*hiver*, *super*, *cancer* etc.).
- When the following word begins with a vowel, however, a silent consonant *may* once again be pronounced, to provide a liaison or "link" between the two words. Some liaisons are *mandatory*, for example the s in *les amants* or *vous avez*; some are *optional*, depending on dialect and register, for example, the first s in *deux cents euros* or *euros irlandais*; and some are *forbidden*, for example, the s in *beaucoup d'hommes aiment*. The t of et is never pronounced and the silent final consonant of a noun is only pronounced in the plural and in set phrases like *pied-à-terre*.
- Doubling a final n and adding a silent e at the end of a word (e.g., *chien* → *chiennne*) makes it clearly pronounced. Doubling a final l and adding a silent e (e.g., *gentil* → *gentille*) adds a [j] sound if the l is preceded by the letter i.
- Some monosyllabic function words ending in a or e, such as *je* and *que*, drop their final vowel when placed before a word that begins with a vowel sound (thus avoiding a hiatus). The missing vowel is replaced by an apostrophe. (e.g., **je ai* is instead pronounced and spelled → *j'ai*). This gives, for example, the same pronunciation for *l'homme qu'il a vu* ("the man whom he saw") and *l'homme qui l'a vu* ("the man who saw him"). However, for Belgian French the sentences are pronounced differently; in the first sentence the syllable break is as "qu'il-a", while the second breaks as "qui-l'a". It can also be noted that, in Quebec French, the second example (*l'homme qui l'a vu*) is more emphasized on *l'a vu*.

Writing system

Alphabet

French is written with the 26 letters of the basic Latin script, with four diacritics appearing on vowels (circumflex accent, acute accent, grave accent, diaeresis) and the cedilla appearing in "ç".

There are two ligatures, "œ" and "æ", but they are often replaced in contemporary French with "oe" and "ae", because the ligatures do not appear on the AZERTY keyboard layout used in French-speaking countries. However this is nonstandard in formal and literary texts.

Orthography

French spelling, like English spelling, tends to preserve obsolete pronunciation rules. This is mainly due to extreme phonetic changes since the Old French period, without a corresponding change in spelling. Moreover, some conscious changes were made to restore Latin orthography (as with some English words such as "debt"):

- Old French *doit* > French *doigt* "finger" (Latin *digitus*)
- Old French *pie* > French *pied* "foot" [Latin *pes* (stem: *ped-*)]

French is a morphophonemic language. While it contains 130 graphemes that denote only 36 phonemes, many of its spelling rules are likely due to a consistency in morphemic patterns such as adding suffixes and prefixes.^[94] Many given spellings of common morphemes usually lead to a predictable sound. In particular, a given vowel combination or diacritic generally leads to one phoneme. However, there is not a one-to-one relation of a phoneme and a single related grapheme, which can be seen in how *tomber* and *tombé* both end with the /e/ phoneme.^[95] Additionally, there are many variations in the pronunciation of consonants at the end of words, demonstrated by how the *x* in *paix* is not pronounced though at the end of *Aix* it is.

As a result, it can be difficult to predict the spelling of a word based on the sound. Final consonants are generally silent, except when the following word begins with a vowel (see Liaison (French)). For example, the following words end in a vowel sound: *pied*, *aller*, *les*, *finit*, *beaux*. The same words followed by a vowel, however, may sound the consonants, as they do in these examples: *beaux-arts*, *les amis*, *pied-à-terre*.

French writing, as with any language, is affected by the spoken language. In Old French, the plural for *animal* was *animals*. The /als/ sequence was unstable and was turned into a diphthong /aus/. This change was then reflected in the orthography: *animaus*. The *us* ending, very common in Latin, was then abbreviated by copyists (monks) by the letter *x*, resulting in a written form *animax*. As the French language further evolved, the pronunciation of *au* turned into /o/ so that the *u* was reestablished in orthography for consistency, resulting in modern French *animaux* (pronounced first /animos/ before the final /s/ was dropped in contemporary French). The same is true for *cheval* pluralized as *chevaux* and many others. In addition, *castel* pl. *castels* became *château* pl. *châteaux*.

- Nasal: *n* and *m*. When *n* or *m* follows a vowel or diphthong, the *n* or *m* becomes silent and causes the preceding vowel to become nasalized (i.e., pronounced with the soft palate extended downward so as to allow part of the air to leave through the nostrils). Exceptions are when the *n* or *m* is doubled, or immediately followed by a vowel. The prefixes *en-* and *em-* are always nasalized. The rules are more complex than this but may vary between dialects.
- Digraphs: French uses not only diacritics to specify its large range of vowel sounds and diphthongs, but also specific combinations of vowels, sometimes with following consonants, to show which sound is intended.
- Geminates: Within words, double consonants are generally not pronounced as geminates in modern French (but geminates can be heard in the cinema or TV news from as recently as the 1970s, and in very refined elocution they may still occur). For example, *illusion* is pronounced [ilyzjɔ̃] and not [il:yzjɔ̃]. However, gemination does occur between words; for example, *une info* ("a news item" or "a piece of information") is pronounced [ynɛfɔ], whereas *une nympho* ("a nymphomaniac") is pronounced [yn:ɛfɔ].
- Accents are used sometimes for pronunciation, sometimes to distinguish similar words, and sometimes based on etymology alone.
 - Accents that affect pronunciation
 - The acute accent (*l'accent aigu*) é (e.g., *école*—school) means that the vowel is pronounced /e/ instead of the default /ə/.

- The grave accent (*l'accent grave*) è (e.g., *élève*—pupil) means that the vowel is pronounced /ɛ/ instead of the default /ə/.
- The circumflex (*l'accent circonflexe*) ê (e.g. *forêt*—forest) shows that an e is pronounced /ɛ/ and that an ô is pronounced /o/. In standard French, it also signifies a pronunciation of /a/ for the letter â, but this differentiation is disappearing. In the mid-18th century, the circumflex was used in place of s after a vowel, where that letter s was not pronounced. Thus, *forest* became *forêt*, *hospital* became *hôpital*, and *hostel* became *hôtel*.
- Diaeresis or tréma (ë, ï, ü, ÿ): over e, i, u or y, indicates that a vowel is to be pronounced separately from the preceding one: *naïve*, *Noël*.
 - The combination of e with diaeresis following o (*Noël* [œ]) is nasalized in the regular way if followed by n (*Samoëns* [wɛ̃])
 - The combination of e with diaeresis following a is either pronounced [ɛ] (*Raphaël*, *Israël* [aɛ]) or not pronounced, leaving only the a (*Staël* [a]) and the a is nasalized in the regular way if aë is followed by n (*Saint-Saëns* [ã])
 - A diaeresis on y only occurs in some proper names and in modern editions of old French texts. Some proper names in which ÿ appears include *Aÿ* (commune in *département de la Marne*, formerly *Aÿ-Champagne*), *Rue des Cloÿs* (alley in the 18th arrondissement of Paris), *Croÿ* (family name and hotel on the Boulevard Raspail, Paris), *Château du Feÿ* (near *Joigny*), *Ghÿs* (name of Flemish origin spelt *Ghijjs* where ij in handwriting looked like ÿ to French clerks), *L'Hay-les-Roses* (commune between Paris and Orly airport), *Pierre Louÿs* (author), *Moÿ-de-l'Aisne* (commune in *département de l'Aisne* and family name), and *Le Blanc de Nicolaÿ* (an insurance company in eastern France).
 - The diaeresis on u appears in the Biblical proper names *Archélaüs*, *Capharnaüm*, *Emmaüs*, *Ésaü*, and *Saül*, as well as French names such as *Haüy*. Nevertheless, since the 1990 orthographic changes, the diaeresis in words containing guë (such as *aiguë* or *ciguë*) may be moved onto the u: *aigüe*, *cigüe*, and by analogy may be used in verbs such as *j'argüe*.
 - In addition, words coming from German retain their umlaut (ä, ö and ü) if applicable but use often French pronunciation, such as *Kärcher* (trademark of a pressure washer).
- The cedilla (*la cédille*) ç (e.g., *garçon*—boy) means that the letter ç is pronounced /s/ in front of the back vowels a, o and u (c is otherwise /k/ before a back vowel). C is always pronounced /s/ in front of the front vowels e, i, and y, thus ç is never found in front of front vowels.
- Accents with no pronunciation effect
 - The circumflex does not affect the pronunciation of the letters i or u, nor, in most dialects, a. It usually indicates that an s came after it long ago, as in *île* (*isle*, compare with English *island*). The explanation is that some words share the same orthography, so the circumflex is put here to mark the difference between the two words. For example, *dites* (you say) / *dîtes* (you said), or even *du* (of the) / *dû* (past participle for the verb *devoir* = must, have to, owe; in this case, the circumflex disappears in the plural and the feminine).
 - All other accents are used only to distinguish similar words, as in the case of distinguishing the adverbs *là* and *où* ("there", "where") from the article *la* ("the" feminine singular) and the conjunction *ou* ("or"), respectively.

Some proposals exist to simplify the existing writing system, but they still fail to gather interest.^{[96][97][98][99]}

In 1990, a reform accepted some changes to French orthography. At the time the proposed changes were considered to be suggestions. In 2016, schoolbooks in France began to use the newer recommended spellings, with instruction to teachers that both old and new spellings be deemed correct.^[100]

Grammar

French is a moderately inflected language. Nouns and most pronouns are inflected for number (singular or plural, though in most nouns the plural is pronounced the same as the singular even if spelled differently); adjectives, for number and gender (masculine or feminine) of their nouns; personal pronouns and a few other pronouns, for person, number, gender, and case; and verbs, for tense, aspect, mood, and the person and number of their subjects. Case is primarily marked using word order and prepositions, while certain verb features are marked using auxiliary verbs. According to the French lexicogrammatical system, French has a rank-scale hierarchy with clause as the top rank, which is followed by group rank, word rank, and morpheme rank. A French clause is made up of groups, groups are made up of words, and lastly, words are made up of morphemes.^[101]

French grammar shares several notable features with most other Romance languages, including

- the loss of Latin declensions
- the loss of the neuter gender
- the development of grammatical articles from Latin demonstratives
- the loss of certain Latin tenses and the creation of new tenses from auxiliaries.

Nouns

Every French noun is either masculine or feminine. Because French nouns are not inflected for gender, a noun's form cannot specify its gender. For nouns regarding the living, their grammatical genders often correspond to that which they refer to. For example, a male teacher is a "enseignant" while a female teacher is a "enseignante". However, plural nouns that refer to a group that includes both masculine and feminine entities are always masculine. So a group of two male teachers would be "enseignants". A group of two male teachers and two female teachers would still be "enseignants". In many situations, and in the case of "enseignant", both the singular and plural form of a noun are pronounced identically. The article used for singular nouns is different from that used for plural nouns and the article provides a distinguishing factor between the two in speech. For example, the singular "le professeur" or "la professeur(e)" (the male or female teacher, professor) can be distinguished from the plural "les professeurs" because "le", "la", and "les" are all pronounced differently. There are some situations where both the feminine and masculine form of a noun are the same and the article provides the only difference. For example, "le dentiste" refers to a male dentist while "la dentiste" refers to a female dentist.

Verbs

Moods and tense-aspect forms

The French language consists of both finite and non-finite moods. The finite moods include the indicative mood (indicatif), the subjunctive mood (subjonctif), the imperative mood (impératif), and the conditional mood (conditionnel). The non-finite moods include the infinitive mood (infinitif), the present participle

(participe présent), and the past participle (participe passé).

Finite moods

Indicative (Indicatif)

The indicative mood makes use of eight tense-aspect forms. These include the present (présent), the simple past (passé composé and passé simple), the past imperfective (imparfait), the pluperfect (plus-que-parfait), the simple future (futur simple), the future perfect (futur antérieur), and the past perfect (passé antérieur). Some forms are less commonly used today. In today's spoken French, the passé composé is used while the passé simple is reserved for formal situations or for literary purposes. Similarly, the plus-que-parfait is used for speaking rather than the older passé antérieur seen in literary works.

Within the indicative mood, the passé composé, plus-que-parfait, futur antérieur, and passé antérieur all use auxiliary verbs in their forms.

Indicatif								
	Présent		Imparfait		Passé composé		Passé simple	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	j'aime	nous aimons	j'aimais	nous aimions	j'ai aimé	nous avons aimé	j'aimai	nous aimâmes
2nd Person	tu aimes	vous aimez	tu aimais	vous aimiez	tu as aimé	vous avez aimé	tu aimas	vous aimâtes
3rd Person	il/elle aime	ils/elles aiment	il/elle aimait	ils/elles aimait	il/elle a aimé	ils/elles ont aimé	il/elle aimâ	ils/elles aimèrent
	Futur simple		Futur antérieur		Plus-que-parfait		Passé antérieur	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	j'aimerai	nous aimerons	j'aurai aimé	nous aurons aimé	j'avais aimé	nous avions aimé	j'eus aimé	nous eûmes aimé
2nd Person	tu aimeras	vous aimerez	tu auras aimé	vous aurez aimé	tu avais aimé	vous aviez aimé	tu eus aimé	vous eûtes aimé
3rd Person	il/elle aimera	ils/elles aimeront	il/elle aura aimé	ils/elles auront aimé	il/elle avait aimé	ils/elles avaient aimé	il/elle eut aimé	ils/elles eurent aimé

Subjunctive (Subjonctif)

The subjunctive mood only includes four of the tense-aspect forms found in the indicative: present (présent), simple past (passé composé), past imperfective (imparfait), and pluperfect (plus-que-parfait).

Within the subjunctive mood, the passé composé and plus-que-parfait use auxiliary verbs in their forms.

Subjonctif								
	Présent		Imparfait		Passé composé		Plus-que-parfait	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	j'aime	nous aimions	j'aimasse	nous aimassions	j'aie aimé	nous ayons aimé	j'eusse aimé	nous eussions aimé
2nd Person	tu aimes	vous aimiez	tu aimasses	vous aimassiez	tu aies aimé	vous ayez aimé	tu eusses aimé	vous eussiez aimé
3rd Person	il/elle aime	ils/elles aiment	il/elle aimât	ils/elles aimassent	il/elle ait aimé	ils/elles aient aimé	il/elle eût aimé	ils/elles eussent aimé

Imperative (Imperatif)

The imperative is used in the present tense (with the exception of a few instances where it is used in the perfect tense). The imperative is used to give commands to you (tu), we/us (nous), and plural you (vous).

Imperatif		
	Présent	
	Singular	Plural
1st Person		aimons
2nd Person	aime	avez

Conditional (Conditionnel)

The conditional makes use of the present (présent) and the past (passé).

The passé uses auxiliary verbs in its forms.

Conditionnel				
	Présent		Passé	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st Person	j'aimerais	nous aimerions	j'aurais aimé	nous aurions aimé
2nd Person	tu aimerais	vous aimeriez	tu aurais aimé	vous auriez aimé
3rd Person	il/elle aimerait	ils/elles aimeraient	il/elle aurait aimé	ils/elles auraient aimé

Voice

French uses both the active voice and the passive voice. The active voice is unmarked while the passive voice is formed by using a form of verb *être* ("to be") and the past participle.

Example of the active voice:

- "Elle aime le chien." *She loves the dog.*
- "Marc a conduit la voiture." *Marc drove the car.*

Example of the passive voice:

- "Le chien est aimé par elle." *The dog is loved by her.*
- "La voiture était conduite par Marc." *The car was driven by Marc.*

Syntax

Word order

French declarative word order is subject–verb–object although a pronoun object precedes the verb. Some types of sentences allow for or require different word orders, in particular inversion of the subject and verb like "Parlez-vous français?" when asking a question rather than just "Vous parlez français ?" Both questions mean the same thing; however, a rising inflection is always used on both of them whenever asking a question, especially on the second one. Specifically, the first translates into "Do you speak French?" while the second one is literally just "You speak French?" To avoid inversion while asking a question, 'Est-ce que' (literally 'is it that') may be placed in the beginning of the sentence. "Parlez-vous français ?" may become "Est-ce que vous parlez français ?" French also uses verb–object–subject (VOS) and object–subject–verb (OSV) word order. OSV word order is not used often and VOS is reserved for formal writings.^[31]

Vocabulary

The majority of French words derive from Vulgar Latin or were constructed from Latin or Greek roots. In many cases a single etymological root appears in French in a "popular" or native form, inherited from Vulgar Latin, and a learned form, borrowed later from Classical Latin. The following pairs consist of a native noun and a learned adjective:

- brother: frère / fraternel from Latin frater / fraternalis
- finger: doigt / digital from Latin digitus / digitalis
- faith: foi / fidèle from Latin fides / fidelis
- eye: œil / oculaire from Latin oculus / ocularis

However, a historical tendency to gallicise Latin roots can be identified, whereas English conversely leans towards a more direct incorporation of the Latin:

- rayonnement / radiation from Latin radiatio
- éteindre / extinguish from Latin extinguere
- noyau / nucleus from Latin nucleus
- ensoleillement / insolation from Latin insolatio

There are also noun-noun and adjective-adjective pairs:

- thing/cause: chose / cause from Latin causa
- cold: froid / frigide from Latin frigidum

It can be difficult to identify the Latin source of native French words, because in the evolution from Vulgar Latin, unstressed syllables were severely reduced and the remaining vowels and consonants underwent significant modifications.

More recently the linguistic policy of the French language academies of France and Quebec has been to provide French equivalents to (mainly English) imported words, either by using existing vocabulary, extending its meaning or deriving a new word according to French morphological rules. The result is often two (or more) co-existing terms for describing the same phenomenon.

- *mercatique / marketing*
- *finance fantôme / shadow banking*
- *bloc-notes / notepad*
- *ailière / wingsuit*
- *tiers-lieu / coworking*

It is estimated that 12% (4,200) of common French words found in a typical dictionary such as the *Petit Larousse* or *Micro-Robert Plus* (35,000 words) are of foreign origin (where Greek and Latin learned words are not seen as foreign). About 25% (1,054) of these foreign words come from English and are fairly recent borrowings. The others are some 707 words from Italian, 550 from ancient Germanic languages, 481 from other Gallo-Romance languages, 215 from Arabic, 164 from German, 160 from Celtic languages, 159 from Spanish, 153 from Dutch, 112 from Persian and Sanskrit, 101 from Native American languages, 89 from other Asian languages, 56 from other Afro-Asiatic languages, 55 from Slavic languages and Baltic languages, 10 from Basque and 144 (about 3%) from other languages.^[102]

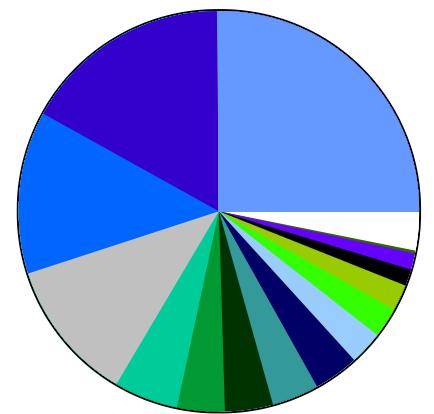
One study analyzing the degree of differentiation of Romance languages in comparison to Latin estimated that among the languages analyzed French has the greatest distance from Latin.^[103] Lexical similarity is 89% with Italian, 80% with Sardinian, 78% with Rhaeto-Romance, and 75% with Romanian, Spanish and Portuguese.^{[104][105][104]}

Numerals

The French counting system is partially vigesimal: twenty (*vingt*) is used as a base number in the names of numbers from 70 to 99. The French word for 80 is *quatre-vingts*, literally "four twenties", and the word for 75 is *soixante-quinze*, literally "sixty-fifteen". This reform arose after the French Revolution to unify the counting systems (mostly vigesimal near the coast, because of Celtic (via Breton) and Viking influences. This system is comparable to the archaic English use of *score*, as in "four score and seven" (87), or "threescore and ten" (70).

In Old French (during the Middle Ages), all numbers from 30 to 99 could be said in either base 10 or base 20, e.g. *vint et doze* (twenty and twelve) for 32, *dous vinz et diz* (two twenties and ten) for 50, *uitante* for 80, or *nonante* for 90.^[106]

Belgian French, Swiss French, Aostan French^[107] and the French used in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi are different in this respect. In the French spoken in these places, 70 and 90 are *septante* and *nonante*. In Switzerland, depending on the local dialect, 80 can be *quatre-vingts* (Geneva, Neuchâtel, Jura) or *huitante* (Vaud, Valais, Fribourg). *Octante* had been used in Switzerland in the past, but is now considered archaic,^[108] while in the Aosta Valley 80 is *huitante*.^[107] In Belgium and in its former African colonies, however, *quatre-vingts* is universally used.



Root languages of
loanwords^[102]

English (25.10%)
Italian (16.83%)
Germanic languages (13.10%)
Gallo-Romance languages (11.45%)
Arabic (5.12%)
German (3.91%)
Celtic languages (3.81%)
Spanish (3.81%)
Dutch (3.64%)
Persian and Sanskrit (2.67%)
Native American languages (2.41%)
Various Asian languages (2.12%)
Afro-Asiatic languages (1.33%)
Slavic and Baltic languages (1.31%)
Basque (0.24%)
Other languages (3.43%)

French, like most European languages, uses a space to separate thousands.^[109] The comma is used in French numbers as a decimal point, i.e. "2,5" instead of "2.5".

Notes

See also

- [Alliance Française](#)
- [Francophonie](#)
- [Français fondamental](#)
- [Francization](#)
- [French language in the United States](#)
- [French language in Canada](#)
- [French AZERTY keyboard](#)
- [French poetry](#)
- [French proverbs](#)
- [Language education](#)
- [List of countries where French is an official language](#)
- [List of English words of French origin](#)
- [List of French loanwords in Persian](#)
- [List of French words and phrases used by English speakers](#)
- [List of German words of French origin](#)
- [Official bilingualism in Canada](#)
- [Francophobia](#)
- [Francophile](#)
- [Varieties of French](#)
- [Influence of French on English](#)

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05. Brincat (2005)
06. Einhorn, E. (1974). *Old French: A Concise Handbook*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 110. ISBN 978-0-521-09838-0.
07. Jean-Pierre Martin, *Description lexicale du français parlé en Vallée d'Aoste*, éd. Musumeci, Quart, 1984.
08. "Septante, octante (huitante), nonante" (<http://www.langue-fr.net/spip.php?article202>). *langue-fr.net* (in French).. See also the English Wikipedia article on Welsh language, especially the section "Counting system" and its note on the influence of Celtic in the French counting system.

09. "Questions de langue: Nombres (écriture, lecture, accord)" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20150101052809/http://xn--academie-franaise-npb1a.fr/la-langue-francaise/questions-de-langue#57>) (in French). Académie française. Archived from the original (<http://academie-francaise.fr/la-langue-francaise/questions-de-langue#57>) on 1 January 2015. Retrieved 15 November 2015.

Further reading

- Nadeau, Jean-Benoît, and Julie Barlow (2006). *The Story of French*. (First U.S. ed.) New York: St. Martin's Press. ISBN 0-312-34183-0
- Ursula Reutner (2017). *Manuel des francophonies*. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter. ISBN 978-3-11-034670-1
- Marc Fumaroli (2011). *When The World Spoke French* (<https://archive.org/details/whenworldspokefr00fuma>). Translated by Richard Howard. ISBN 978-1-59017-375-6.

External links

Organizations

- Fondation Alliance française (<http://www.fondation-alliancefr.org/>): an international organization for the promotion of French language and culture (in French)
- Agence de promotion du FLE (<https://web.archive.org/web/20170201102539/http://www.fle.fr/en/>): Agency for promoting French as a foreign language

Courses and tutorials

- Français interactif (<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/fi/>): interactive French program, University of Texas at Austin
- Tex's French Grammar (<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/tex/>), University of Texas at Austin
- Lingopolis French (<https://lingopolis.org/french/>)
- French lessons in London (<http://www.thelanguagemachine.co.uk/french-lessons-in-london/>), The Language machine

Online dictionaries

- Oxford Dictionaries French Dictionary (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com>)
- Collins Online English ↔ French Dictionary (<http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english-french>)
- Centre national de ressources textuelles et lexicales (<http://www.cnrtl.fr/>): monolingual dictionaries (including the Trésor de la langue française), language corpora, etc.

Grammar

Verbs

- [1] (<https://web.archive.org/web/20120206085345/http://www.verbix.com/languages/french.shtml>)

Vocabulary

- Swadesh list in English and French

Numbers

- Smith, Paul. "French, Numbers" (https://web.archive.org/web/20170302235307/http://www.numberphile.com/videos/french_numbers.html). *Numberphile*. Brady Haran. Archived from the original (http://www.numberphile.com/videos/french_numbers.html) on 2 March 2017. Retrieved 7 April 2013.

Books

- (in French) La langue française dans le monde 2010 (https://web.archive.org/web/20120603081542/http://www.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/langue_francaise_monde_integral.pdf) (Full book freely accessible)

Articles

- "The status of French in the world" (<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/francophony-1113/the-status-of-french-in-the-world/>)." Ministry of Foreign Affairs (France)

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